



Equality Policy and Objectives

Date drafted:	October 2018
Date approved:	November 2018
Date to be reviewed :	Every four years (with information about progress against objectives published annually)

Introduction

Under the Equality Act 2010, Lawnswood School is expected to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This requires us to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act.
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who have a shared characteristic and those who do not.

As a public organisation, we are required to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Publish Equality Objectives which are specific and measurable

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). For schools, this means that it is unlawful to discriminate against students or treat them less favourably because of their:

- Gender
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity

We understand the importance of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

We aim to provide the best possible education and greatest possible progress for all of our students. The ethos and core values of our school, reflected in our 7 Cs, reflect our commitment to fully including and respecting all members of our school community.

School context

The school context shows a range of complex factors that can influence student progress.

In late 2018, Lawnswood School is in:

- the third quintile for % girls (nationally girls outperform boys)
- the second highest quintile for FSM (free school meals) (nationally achievement for this group is low) and this percentage is increasing rapidly
- the highest quintile for EAL
- the second highest quintile for deprivation measures
- the second to lowest quintile for Statemented / School Action Plus schools - this is linked to statementing procedures in Leeds.

In autumn 2018, the basic characteristics by year group show a changing school population.

- There are more boys than girls in year groups 9 to 12.
- The percentage FSM (last 6 years) has decreased a little at 26.2%. It is highest in Year 9 and Year 12 at 46%.
- The percentage of BME and EAL students continues to be high (EAL at 43.4%) in line with the changing population of Leeds.
- There is a rapid increase in the percentage of students with SEN, with around a third of students in the current Year 8 and Year 9 having SEN.
- The school has a higher proportion of students with low prior ability, and a lower proportion of students with high prior ability, particularly at Key Stage 3. This will impact on the percentage of students making 3 levels of progress in these year groups as nationally a higher proportion of high ability students make 3 levels of progress.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling our statutory duties, we are guided by the following principles.

1. All members of the school and wider community are of equal value

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or socio- economic circumstances
- whatever their gender and sexual identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or background
- whatever their age.

2. We recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Although our policies, procedures and activities aim not to discriminate, we do differentiate, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender and sexual orientation so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation or national origin, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment
- positive intergenerational attitudes and relationships.

4. We will ensure that the recruitment, retention and ongoing development of staff is undertaken in a fair and equitable manner to support our school's vision and values

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people

6. Ethos and organisation

We aim to apply the above principles to all our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- students' progress, attainment and assessment
- students' and staff personal development, welfare and wellbeing
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff and governor recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community
- participation of groups in wider school activities
- preparing all members of the learning community for living and positively contributing to a diverse society.

7. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

Lawnswood School is opposed to all forms of prejudice, particularly if it adversely affects our ability to fulfil our legal duties for all aspects of equality, including:

- prejudices related to disability and special educational needs
- prejudices related to racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities (e.g. anti-semitism and Islamophobia) and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with current legislation, and that this policy statement and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. A nominated member of the Governing Body will monitor the implementation of this policy statement.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy statement; for ensuring that all staff, governors and visitors are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination. A nominated member of the senior leadership team has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy statement.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge and deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support students in their classes for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work
- ensure that students have the opportunity to have their voices heard with regard to equality issues

Our Equality Objectives

1. To promote understanding and awareness of different religious beliefs, cultural differences and LGBTQ+ to reduce homophobic, sexist and racist language within the school.
2. To close gaps in attainment and progress between students and all groups of students; especially boys and girls, students eligible for free school meals, students with special educational needs and disabilities, children looked after and students from different heritage groups.
3. Ensure all students regardless of their gender, ethnicity, ability or background have good attendance and punctuality so they have equal opportunity and access to the opportunities available to students in the school.
4. Deliver high quality professional development to all staff to ensure they are empowered to challenge and support all groups of students, in particular those with additional needs to meet our high expectations and are successful in line with their peers.
5. Reduce exclusions by ensuring students' SEMH needs are met by using the graduated response and working in partnership with outside agencies.